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The Experience of Shopping for Tourists

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The Experience of Shopping for Tourists

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The Experience of Shopping for Tourists

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The increasing popularity of shopping tourism is recognized worldwide. This Bachelor's thesis aims to study the phenomenon of tourist's shopping and evaluate if this behavior is similar regardless of the destination. The importance of shopping as an activity during travel is highlighted, as well as preferences in memorabilia purchases. The information received could be useful for example in developing tourist destinations' offer of shopping related services and product offer for tourists.

The theoretical basis for the research consists of two major themes, experiences and shopping. Both of these entities are divided into relevant subcategories. The main points of experiences as a phenomenon, experiences as products and tourism experiences as well as shopping, purchasing behavior and shopping in tourism are discussed. These theories help perceiving all the factors that affect shopping tourism. As noticed, these themes mix when evaluating the overall experience of tourist shopping.

The empirical part of the research was conducted in a form of a survey. Quantitative research method was considered most suitable for this study. The survey was targeted to both foreign and domestic tourists visiting Lahti and implemented mainly during the high tourist season, the summer of 2013. The questionnaire, in Finnish or in English, was offered to tourists visiting Lahti tourist information. Originally co-operation with local accommodation providers was sought to greatly increase the reaching of tourists but no answers were received. Therefore the number of survey answers was left low and insufficient.

The research confirms the applicability of the existing theory to real-life situations, even though the research can only be seen as a subjective indicator due to its small scale. Even in a non-mass tourist destination like Lahti, shopping is still seen as a favorable activity among others. Demand for local crafts, good quality souvenirs and gift items still exists and these are some of the major reasons for shopping in a destination.

Key words: Shopping, Experience, Tourism, Lahti

Aina Domin
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Matkailijan ostokset elämyksenä

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Ostosmatkailun suosion lisääntyminen tunnustetaan maailmanlaajuisesti. Tämä opinnäytetyö tähtää matkailijoiden ostoksien teon tutkimiseen sekä arvioimaan, onko ostoskäyttäytyminen samankaltaista matkakohteesta riippumatta. Tutkimuksen painopiste on shoppailun tähtäyksessä aktiviteettina matkan aikana sekä mieltymyksissä matkamuistojen ostamisen suhteen. Hankittua tietoa voitaisiin käyttää hyödyksi esimerkiksi matkakohteiden shoppailuun liittyvien palveluiden tai turisteille tarkoitettujen tuotteiden kehittämisessä.

Tutkimuksen teoreettinen perusta käsittää kaksi merkittävää teemaa, elämykset ja shoppailu. Kumpikin kokonaisuus on myös jaettu olennaisiin alakategorioihin. Opinnäytetyössä käsitellään elämyskäsitettä, elämyksen tuotteistamista ja matkailuelämyksiä sekä shoppailua, kuluttajakäyttäytymistä ja matkailijoiden ostoksia. Nämä teoriat auttavat käsittämään kaikki matkailijoiden shoppailuun vaikuttavat tekijät.

Tutkimuksen empiirinen osuus toteutettiin kyselynä. Määrällisen tutkimuksen katsottiin olevan tarkoituksenmukaisin lähestymistapa tälle tutkimukselle. Kysely suunnattiin sekä ulkomaille että suomalaisille Lahdessa vieraileville matkailijoille ja toteutettiin suurimmaksi osaksi vilkkaimman matkailusesongin aikana, kesällä 2013. Suomen- tai englanninkielistä kyselylomaketta tarjottiin Lahden matkailuneuvonnassa vieraileville turisteille. Alun perin yhteistyötä tiedusteltiin paikallisten majoitustoimijoiden kanssa, mutta tuloksetta. Tämä vaikutti olennaisesti siihen, että vastausten määrä jäi vähäiseksi ja riittämättömäksi.

Tehty tutkimus osoittaa olemassa olevan teorian pätevän myös tosielämässä, vaikka suppeutensa takia se voidaan nähdä vain subjektiivisena mittarina. Jopa Lahden kaltaisessa ei-massaturismikohteessa shoppailu koetaan edelleen hyvänä aktiviteettina muiden joukossa. Kysyntää paikallisille käsitöille, hyvänlaatuisille matkamuistoille ja lahjaesineille löytyy edelleen ja niiden löytäminen onkin yksi tärkeimmistä motiiveista matkakohteessa shoppailulle.

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1 Introduction

Shopping has developed from an ordinary purchasing chore to one of the major free time activities. This also applies to tourism; around the world there are shopping festivals and huge shopping centers as attractions that draw tourists' attention. Even World Tourism Organization recognizes shopping as one of the main travel motivations (Tourism Review 2014). Therefore it comes to question if the enthusiasm towards shopping can be seen regardless the destination, not only in shopping-oriented destinations.

This Bachelor's thesis aims to study the importance of shopping as a tourism activity as a whole and the experience of shopping for tourists. The researchers are particularly interested in the role of locally made crafts in memorabilia shopping. The emphasis is on the tourist's view though other aspects of the phenomenon are also taken into consideration. The thesis also includes a small scale, locally targeted survey about shopping motivation, attitudes and behavior of tourists. This survey was conducted in Lahti and it was targeted to both Finnish and foreign travelers visiting Lahti.

The thesis consists of three parts. The theoretical frame is built on two main subjects, experiences and shopping. Understanding these phenomena and the relation of them to each other and in the context of tourism is important. Both of these topics are also divided to relevant subcategories. The second part of the thesis thoroughly describes Lahti as a destination, pointing out the settings for tourism. This information gives an insight of what kinds of activities tourists participate while their stay and hints how the destination environment may affect shopping.

1.1 Research problem and research plan

A Bachelor's thesis is about the ability to use available knowledge to conduct a research and evaluate its results (Laurea University of Applied Sciences 2008, 3). The basis of a research project is to form a research problem (Kananen 2011). This thesis research was conducted by the researchers with the topic they chose themselves. The research problem is to find out if shopping is an important part of tourism regardless of destination. In this case of study, the destination would be Lahti, which is not, by the knowledge of the researchers, especially known as a shopping destination.

The research process started by making a research plan. Quantitative research approach was selected because of the nature of the project. The experiential nature of human behavior as well as consumption has been quite widely studied by researchers. There are also studies di-

rectly concerning shopping tourism. This theoretical knowledge forms a good knowledge base to conduct a research in a smaller scale. For the research project, a survey was created to gather data, new information.

The formed survey aimed to study today's tourists and their opinions and own actions regarding shopping. Monetary spending, purchase choices, stores selected, and satisfaction with their purchases were main points of the questionnaire. Also meaningfulness of local crafts and souvenirs and attitude towards holiday shopping was intended to be measured. These research questions or indicators were selected based on the existing knowledge of above-mentioned studies.

1.2 Argumentation for the thesis

The Bachelor's thesis is a process of professional development. By the end of the project researchers will learn how to conduct small research and development projects and how to gather and analyze data. The research topic is supported with existing theoretical knowledge. (Laurea University of Applied Sciences 2008, 3.)

Any similar research project has not been done before in the Degree Programme of Tourism in Laurea. Nevertheless, shopping has proven to be an essential part of tourism. Therefore studying shopping tourism in the Finnish scale could bring new insight for the industry. The information received could be useful for example in developing tourist destinations' offer for shopping related services and product offer for tourists. The researchers could use the knowledge acquired in the future for the development of their own carrier path as well.

2 Experience

Experiences are complex phenomena that appear frequently in our lives. As they can spring from any situation and range from very end to other depending on the individual experiencing the situation, there is no single explanation for an experience. It seems to also matter whether the experience is an ordinary one, or especially meaningful for the experiencer. Today's businesses have harnessed this knowledge and now make use of the experience-seeking nature of the human being.

2.1 Theory behind the experience

According to Oxford Dictionaries (2013), an experience refers to “an event or occurrence which leaves an impression on someone”. It has also been connected with a feeling or sensation. Eskelinen (2011) defines an experience as a meaningful relation between a target and a human. They are firstly created in the minds of the experiencers. An experience can include just about anything. It is a personal phenomenon, meaning that not every person would live a similar experience in the same situation. Experiences can be positive and negative. (Eskelinen 2011, 3, 6-8; Oxford Dictionaries 2013.)

Dewey (2005) sees that all experiences result from interaction between a living being and a thing in the world he lives in. There are general patterns in many kinds of experiences and this fact is its base. An experience connects doing and undergoing, the action and the result. This relation must be perceived in order to truly experience something and the extent and contents of this relation form the significant content of the experience. Any interference in perception of this relation limits the experience. (Dewey 2005, 45-46.)

According to Väyrynen (2010), experience as a concept does not have long roots. It originates only from 19th century. Actually, the English word "experience" does not describe the concept thoroughly. Finnish language separates an overall experience "kokemus" and a deeper, more life-touching experience "elämys", which is the main focus in this part of the study. This is similar to some other languages, like German or Swedish. All in all, the true meaning and full explanation of a lived experience is impossible to rationally explain. (Väyrynen 2010, 21-22.)

There are unconscious and conscious experiences. One's past experiences, current situation and its potential meanings define the forming of one's experience. The experiencer interprets the situation based on the different components, like feelings of the structure or contents. The experience is first filtered through the mind's defense mechanism unconsciously. This is the experience process from unconscious to conscious. Only parts of the unconscious experience form the conscious experience. This varies based on the mind's defenses, past experiences and the meaning of the contents to the experiencer. Then the experiencer will be able to tell forward or describe the experience. The experience can also still evolve even though it has become conscious, as the mind can process it further later on. (Latomaa 2010, 98-100.)

For one person, even the same event or situation can be experienced differently, depending on the point of view. A horse race, for example, can be a passive, absorbed event, if viewed from a distance or through television. At the rim of the arena, on the other hand, the experiencer is right at the heart of the event, sinking in the sounds, smells and sights. Similarly, the

same film may be a totally different experience if watched in a movie theater rather than at home. (Pine & Gilmore, 2011, 46-47.)

Karppinen & Latomaa (2010) separate six types of experiences. This is based on how the meanings are filtered, what kind of unconscious images or memories the experience touches, what kind of fantasies it arouses and how the mind protects itself from undesired elements. The fantasies can be positive, frustrating or negative and the mind can either use a lot of protective measures or just a little of them. As a result, the feelings of the experience can be positive, mixed or negative. The seventh option is that the experience is being rejected totally due to too much negative pressure. (Latomaa 2010, 102-103.)

In Pine & Gilmore's (2011) theories, experiences have several dimensions. They name participation and connection as the two most important ones. Participation can be divided into active and passive; whether the experiencer is taking part into the action behind the experience or not, or something from between. Connection, on the other hand, is a distinction between absorption and immersion. Absorption is described as "occupying a person's attention by bringing the experience into the mind from a distance". In a way, the experience is being soaked by the person. Immersion means just the opposite; that the person is part of creating the experience or goes into it. (Pine & Gilmore 2011, 45 - 46.)

When those dimensions are combined, they define four different realms of experience. Entertainment experiences fall into the dimension of passive participation and they are being absorbed by using different senses. In education experiences the experiencer also absorbs something others create. It differs from entertainment because it still requires active participation, through mind or body, in the process in able to learn. Escapist experiences need actively involved participants, totally immersed in the action. They are literally an escape to a different environment from the person's everyday life and worries. Esthetic experiences, on the other hand, are purely about being immersed in an event and staying passive about one's surroundings. The next figure illustrates the connections of the realms of experiences. (Pine & Gilmore 2011, 47-51, 53.)

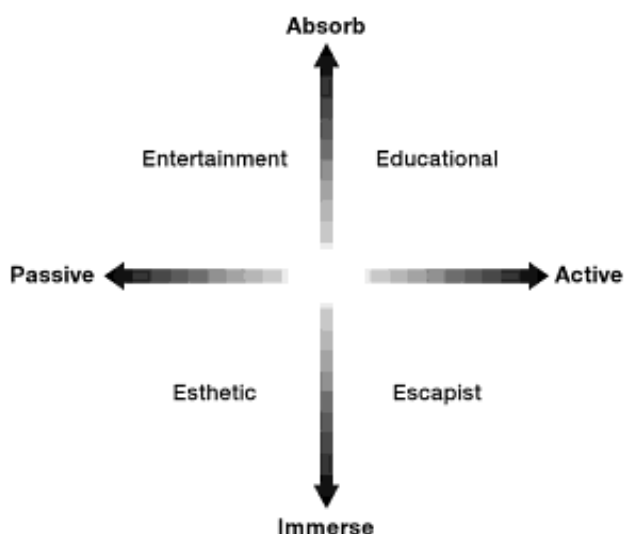


Figure 1: Experience realms (Pine & Gilmore 2011, 26)

It is said that the experience is at its deepest if all four of these experience classes combine in the same experience. Pine & Gilmore (2011) also confirm that it is possible to combine two realms of experiences to form again a new type of experience. Education can be combined with entertainment, escapist or esthetic; esthetic can be put together with escapist or entertainment and escapist and entertainment make a pair. These kinds of experiences can help holding attention, change the context, sustain appreciation, modify conditions, getting presence or release emotional tensions. (Pine & Gilmore 2011, 58, 64.)

Markkanen (2008) has studied Schmitt's theories of experience marketing. The idea is that comprehensive experience has been divided into five strategic experiential models. A comprehensive experience combines feelings, senses and thinking as well as action and social cohesion. The more of these experience factors have been used in creating the experience, the deeper is the overall experience. (Markkanen 2008, 25.)

The experience leaves the stronger memory the better different senses are stimulated during the experience. These stimulants should promote the theme of the experience and even improve it. The smell of fresh pastry straight from the oven enhances the experience of visiting a bakery, for example. Serving tastings may be the easiest way to add sensory stimulants in a service. (Pine & Gilmore 2011, 88.)

2.2 Experience as a product

In the modern world the consumption of goods has been turning into consumption of experiences. It is more and more about the experience of using a certain product rather than the product itself. Still, until the end of the 1990's, an experience was equaled as a service, even though they are a totally different thing. Buying an experience is beyond ordinary; it's personal, memorable and enjoyable. Lately, the production of experiences has been growing. It is only right to start talking about the experience society or the experience economy.

(Väyrynen 2010, 20; Pine & Gilmore 2011, 3.)

Even though consumers are the ones creating their own experiences, companies try to influence this experience creation. This requires staging the products and the customers for a play that helps experiences to appear. Carù & Cova (2007) list three main points that are used to produce experiences. Firstly there has to be a story and a plot. Secondly the physical environment for the experience should be stimulating senses and support the theme. Lastly, the consumer needs to be actively participating the happening, assisted by personnel.

(Carù & Cova 2007, 7-8.)

This experience shift can be seen in different traditional services. Including experience creating elements, like a concrete theme, pleasant activities, entertainment or learning, those service providers step onto a new level. This way eating in a restaurant, visiting a toy shop or even parking in a parking hall can become a memorable experience.

(Pine & Gilmore 2011, 4-5.)

Even though the meaningfulness of an experience cannot be guaranteed, LEO - Lapland Center of Expertise for the Experience Industry (2009) has created a model called the Experience Pyramid to help creating perfect conditions for an experience. It's an approach in two parts: the levels and elements of the experience. This pyramid, illustrated in figure 2, can be used as a tool to better understand the structure of the experience elements of a product and how to improve them. (LEO 2009)

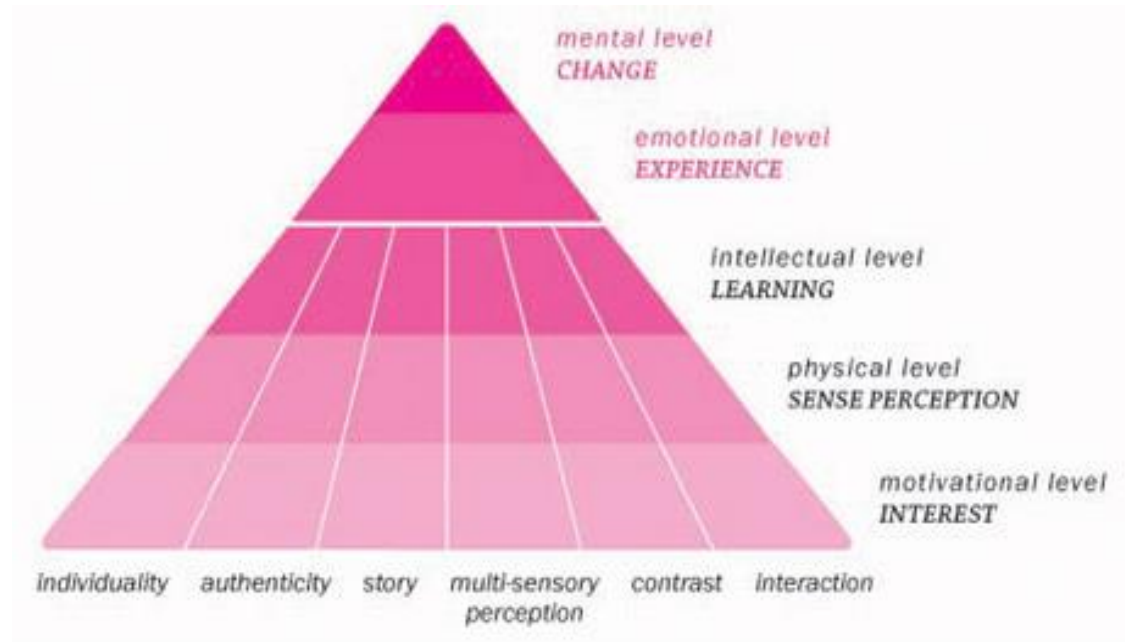


Figure 2: The Experience Pyramid (LEO 2009)

Tarssanen (2009) explains the experience pyramid further. There are six elements for a meaningful experience. Individuality is about the product being unique and customized to customer desires. Authenticity is a perspective; a customer needs to find the product genuine and believe in it. Authenticity is connected to culture, local lifestyle and the story-element, the theme that binds the different aspects of the product together. A good story behind the product is catching and attractive. Multi-sensory perception matters because using different senses can both support and weaken the experience. Last but not least is interaction, the communication between the actors around the experience. This is not only the producer and the customers but also the product itself. The right kind of team spirit is essential. (Tarssanen 2009, 11-14.)

The levels of the experience in the pyramid present the process of experiencing. At the motivational level the interest towards the product is being awakened through marketing. Ideally all the elements described earlier are included already at this stage. At the physical level the actual product is being experienced. A good, quality product is well balanced and pleasant. Intellectual level starts processing the experience on the mental stage. It is where satisfaction, other options and learning start. The meaningfulness of the experience, which may vary from person to person, comes to picture at the emotional level. Finally, at the mental level a strong, good emotional experience can possibly lead to an experience of personal change. (Tarssanen 2009, 15-16.)

2.3 Experiences in Tourism

Experience-seeking is one of the basic human features. People travel because they want to experience and feel like they are getting experiences. Strong emotions like excitement, uniqueness, amazement or peace, associated with travel are experiences themselves. People are also motivated to travel by contrast between every-day life and travel, change, social cohesion or ceasing the moment. (Perttula 2004, 29, 31-34.)

Tourism experiences are about shifting from people's normal environment to something new and different. They are about confronting strange cultures, habits and environments. Tourism is also a personal learning experience, letting the tourist view his own life and home from a new perspective. Positive and unforgettable experiences make tourism experience meaningful and may even lead to personal development. These experiences often include doing something extraordinary, something the person would not do in his normal life.

(Tarssanen 2009, 6.)

Within tourism, many experiences are connected to leisure and the services used during travel. Tourism experiences can be divided in three categories based on the way they are achieved. There are physical, aesthetic or mental and cultural experiences. Physical experiences are the result of different activities that engage the body, such as sports or other physical sensations, including using single senses like vision or taste. Experiences of aesthetics and the mind engage emotions. Cultural experiences include high culture and popular culture, the environment and traditions. (Pitkänen & Tuohino 2004, 88-91.)

Even though tourism experiences are often referred as experiences tourists have in the destination, the overall experience already starts when planning the travel. While at the destination tourists face many kinds of experiences. The destination as a place itself and all the services offered and consumed create a complex stage for experiencing and every individual experiences it differently. The tourism companies input in experience creation should not be understated. After travel the experience continues as a post-travel phase, when people share their destination experiences with other or discuss them with their fellow travelers.

(Morgan, Lugosi & Ritchie 2010, 3-4.)

There are many different factors that affect the tourism experience. As a base there are personal factors such as age, gender and cultural background. As mentioned earlier too, past experiences as well as expectations towards the destination and experiences at the destination influence upcoming experiences. Also satisfaction with the services used while travelling influence the overall experience. Therefore it is very hard to ensure or foresee certain tourism

experiences and all the factors influencing the experience should be carefully selected to serve the tourist's needs. (Liedes & Ketonen 2004, 16-19.)

3 Shopping

Traditionally “shopping”, or “doing purchases”, is a consumption-aimed action in a place where there is a possibility to buy. It can be part of daily routines and planned beforehand. It is quite rational, as efficient as possible and always includes purchasing. Consumption is rational thinking and feelings, choices and refusal. Shopping, especially leisure shopping is based on basic human things, joys, fears, wants and contacts. (Markkanen 2008, 61, 63; Kortelainen 2005, 82-83.)

Especially women have been studied by their shopping behavior or customer type. Economical shoppers are precise with cost-efficiency and expenditure. Lazy shoppers do not enjoy shopping and leisure shoppers love shopping and consider it almost a hobby. There are impulsive shoppers who make their shopping choices spontaneously, planners who follow a strict shopping list and shoppers from somewhere between these two. Some shoppers have certain values or ethical reason behind their shopping and venue choices. (Kortelainen 2005, 84.)

Todor (2007) introduces two different buying personalities. These are “indifferent” and “engaged” personalities and they are based on the value the customer is looking for. Often making purchases is a must and therefore people try to use as little money, time and effort on it. It doesn't really matter which product it is or where it is being bought if it is the cheapest one or the easiest to get. These kinds of shoppers are the indifferent personalities. They aren't loyal to any sellers since they are emotionally indifferent to the products. Only price and convenience matter. (Todor 2007, 2-3, 8.)

The other type of customers are motivated by their desires and become emotionally and psychologically engaged. They enjoy shopping for the sake of the activity and make it an experience of its own. They are also very interested in the products. If a company is able to fulfill the customers' need for these kinds of shopping experiences where the company, its products and shopping become one, it can acquire very dedicated, long term clients. (Todor 2007, 3, 8-9.)

3.1 Consumption behaviour

According to Peter (2008), consumer behavior is the combination of actions performed and thoughts and feelings people experience during a consumption process. Also the environment

affects this behavior and is part of it. Most importantly it is about interaction and exchange, making it a dynamic process. It should also be noted that consumer behavior changes all the time because of constant development in the society and changes in the thinking, feelings and actions of consumers. (Peter 2008, 5-6.)

In theory, the process of purchasing consists of four stages. Firstly there appears to be a need that triggers the idea to buy something. Then this person processes the need and seeks information about the product. This process usually leads to decision of purchase and many factors about the needed product, like brand, item or method of payment. After the purchase the buyer evaluates the reaction this consumption event arose. Expectations of the result have a major role in satisfaction or discontent with purchase. In action, there are countless of factors that affect all these phases. (Dubois 2000, 228-231, 239, 247.)

There are three different research approaches that are usually used to study consumer behavior. The interpretive method relies on cultural anthropology methods and theories and seeks understanding of consumptions and what it means to people. The traditional method seeks to explain the decisions consumers make and their consumption behavior using knowledge from psychology and sociology. Marketing science on the other hand rather plays on statistics and economical methods and tries to predict consumer decisions and behavior. The studies can include interviews, experiments, surveys and simulations among other methods and companies use a lot of money yearly to study consumers. (Peter 2008, 10.)

Starting from the consumer itself, his or her background is the first thing that affects purchasing decisions. One's culture affects on behavior, values, habits and attitudes. Also one's social class and lifestyle influence the things one finds interesting or desired. When viewing closer, it can be noticed that the social environment, people centrally in one's life, leave their mark in one's behavior. At the center are one's individual characteristics. Dubois (2000) presents a figure (figure 3) illustrating these levels. (Dubois 2000, 9-10, 198-207.)

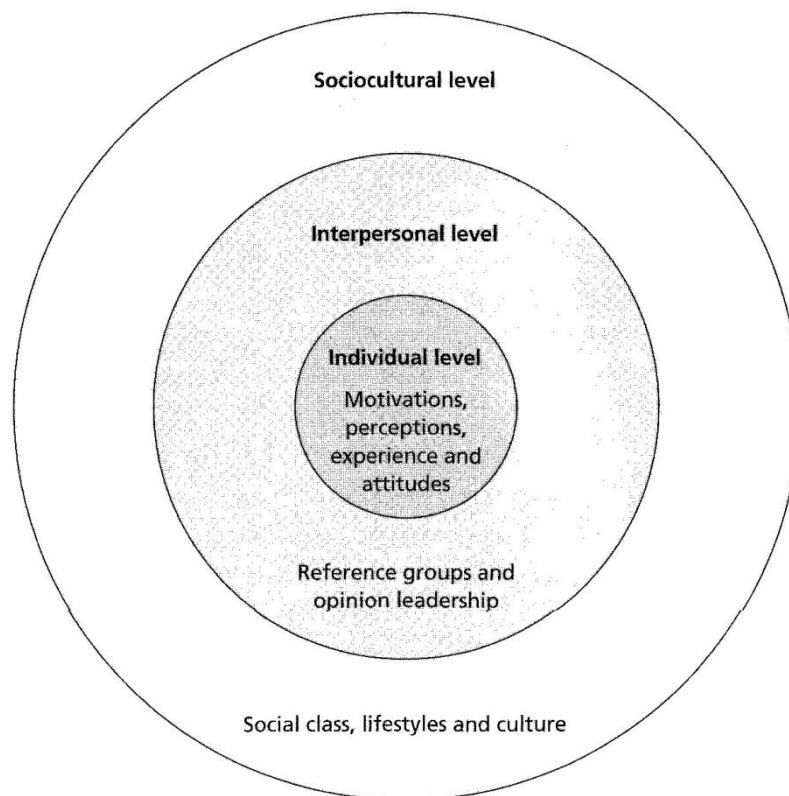


Figure 3: The three levels of explanation of buying and consumption behavior (Dubois 2000, 10)

A German research revealed that over 50% of purchase decisions are made spontaneously. Even though people think their decisions were random, the decision was actually made using maybe countless experiences gathered during their lives. These somatic signs guide our choices. New signs form every day when we learn new things and make conclusions. Companies intend to create associations in the customers' minds that would favor their products and those associations may make people more likely to buy them. The more surprising, pleasing or even disturbing or scary the associations are, the more unforgettable the products are. (Lindstrom 2009, 139-148.)

In today's world people often face an overload of information. Surveys reveal that the consumers are annoyed by ads and the ad must be very good to hold attention. Human brain is only capable to process information to a certain limit. Therefore people attend to only some selected stimuli. Their own needs and interests certainly increase the attention to commercials. On the other hand, weak, irrelevant or too frequent stimuli just make people forget them. Contrast and more uncommon approaches stand out. Consumers also tend to give different meanings to the stimuli they receive, based on their own view, expectations and other factors. (Solomon, Bamossy, Askegaard & Hogg 2006, 47-50.)

In the year 2007 companies used 12 billion dollars for marketing research only in the United States. Still many companies do not actually know what their customers want. For example eight out of ten new products fail to please the market during their first three months in stores. According to Lindstrom (2009), interviews and theme group surveys fail, because the customers do not actually know what's behind their own decisions. Therefore their answers often aren't as truthful as they think they are and the outcome of the survey is corrupt. (Lindstrom 2009, 36-38.)

It has been studied that 90% of our consumption behavior is unconscious. Rational decisions, like pure need or pricing level, are just one reason for buying a certain product. Behind these factors there are countless different reasons for our choices. We buy out of fear, for pleasure, because of habits, to make a certain impression or because the product appeals to our senses in a pleasant way. Also, according to some studies, in about 50% of purchases the functional meaning of the product affects the decision of buying. The other half consists of different emotional benefits. (Lindstrom 2009, 200-205; Markkanen 2008, 25.)

According to Solomon et al (2006), people often buy products for their meaning to themselves. The item bought may have a deeper meaning to the person and that differentiates this specific item from other similar ones. This "relationship" with the product may be of different type depending on the meaning. The product, for example, may boost the user's identity or there may be some strong emotions, like love, connected to the product. (Solomon et al 2006, 15.)

Human brain uses emotions to determine value for products or brands they use. Therefore, between two competing products, the winner is usually the one that arouses more positive emotions in the buyer. It also means that rational thinking is pushed to the background and the product that is more emotive will be chosen over an otherwise better product. Also rituals related to products create an emotional bond between the consumer and brands or products and make them more catching and easier to be distinguished from similar products or brands. Most of the people in the world perform some sort of rituals in a daily basis. A type of purchasing may be a ritual-like buying style, buying a certain product is a habit that is being repeated regularly. Also collecting similar items or items connected with a theme is one sort of a ritual. (Lindstrom 2009, 43, 102-102, 115-116.)

Media and advertising try create associations of products to customers. Television, for example, is full of advertising, but the truth is that an average person forgets almost all of it. One study revealed that only seven per cent of watchers remembered the company or product in a television commercial they recently saw. This amount is less than half of what it was in 1965. Less than four out of ten people see a positive connection between products and

commercial messages and 65 per cent pay attention to brand in advertising. Remembering such information later on impacts purchase decisions. (Solomon et al 2006, 81.)

Since direct advertising is not always very effective, companies use nowadays a lot of embedded marketing, meaning that they place products carefully in movie scenes or TV- series. A study shows that this is effective only if the product has an essential role in the plot or story, otherwise the viewers forget it. If embedded marketing is successful, the viewers form a positive association between the product and the emotions the show creates. They not only remember the specific product better but also more easily forget other brands.

(Lindstrom 2009, 52, 61, 64-65.)

As noticed, positive associations, like emotions or dreams, affect on consumption. A service with a smile can make a person to buy more or the country of origin may determine whether the product is a success or not. A mental image or vision that connects emotions and products may be so strong, that even seeing elements related to product's brand makes the person think of the brand. This fact is being utilized in subliminal advertising. The associations people create are actually more powerful than normal advertisement.

(Lindstrom 2009, 90-91, 97-99.)

When considering purchasing behavior and how consumers find products, their environment, how they sense it and process the sensory input they receive have an effect on the result. These sensory inputs can awake memories, moods, emotions and experiences, both negative and positive, that affect in one's behavior. Also single senses may be used as a tool to differentiate products, brands or highlight certain properties. Vision, of course, has a big role in both marketing and purchasing. For example colors have multiple meanings to people, starting from cultural differences to brand recognition. (Solomon et al 2006, 39-44.)

In many cases though sight may not have as much power as it has been thought it has. People receive so much visual stimulus that they may not react to it anymore. Smells awaken emotions and a good smell-action association can even urge people to buy. People also like touching and trying how the products feel like. Even sounds can affect people's feelings and purchasing: music can guide people's behavior or mood and advertisement tunes or certain sounds related to a product make these products distinctive and memorable.

(Lindstrom 2009, 152-156, 160-167.)

Generally it could be noticed that emotions, memories, feelings and moods influence behavior. Many different kinds of stimuli awake these things and they have an impact on consumption. These sensations often pass more rational reasons for purchases. For example, if a customer is in a good mood he may be more generous or more willing to take recommendations

in his purchases. The consumers also have certain attitudes and preferences that guide their choices. These may change over time and often marketing aims to change them to a more favorable direction. (Dubois 2000, 108-116, 123-124.)

Humans unintentionally mimic what they see. This also applies to consumption. If a person continuously sees others using a certain product he starts wanting the same product for himself. Seeing something emotionally rewarding in television has the same result. Even though first this person didn't even find this product interesting, eventually buying this product feels like a reward. This releases dopamine to the body and fills the person with pleasure and good feelings. Therefore people conclude that buying things makes them feel good and they may even become addicted to shopping. This is another way for the industry to affect on consumption. (Lindstrom 2009, 71, 75, 77-80.)

3.2 Experience shopping

Experience shopping can be defined as a memorable occasion in a place with a possibility to do purchases but also participate in some sort of a nice event. All the senses are being stimulated, thoughts are being provoked and emotions and imagination have a special role. These shoppers aim for enjoyment, sensory pleasure, getting new ideas, having fun and to get good experiences rather than just to do purchases. The purchase may often be merely a memory of the shopping experience. (Markkanen 2008, 13; Simonen 2008, 48.)

Often the consumer is responsible for creating his/her own shopping experience. In today's world these consumers need a chance for self-fulfillment. There are many examples for these kinds of experiences from customizing running shoes to building our own toys right in the store. The customer is being brought right in the spotlight and given the opportunity to create something himself/herself. The concept of "retail-tainment" turns shopping into having fun. This may be behind the success of many companies. Shops or even shopping centers are being built around a theme, letting the customers to dive into a different world. (Markkanen 2008, 18-19, 41; Badot & Filser 2007, 166-167.)

Kortelainen (2005) uses a term "himoshoppaaja", "shopaholic", of a person who considers buying new things a pleasurable hobby. These kinds of people enjoy department store atmosphere and walking around the stores, good service and interaction with sales personnel and the freedom to dream. They like following fashion and new trends in interior design and equally yearn for beauty. For some people shopping is a way to reward oneself, for many it

may be a social event with family or friends. The far end is an addiction to shopping which causes different kinds of problems for the addicted person and others as well.

(Kortelainen 2005, 84-87.)

Shopping has become a considerable pastime. People also spend more time shopping than before. The time spent in shopping centers for a single visit has grown to three hours in the 2000's from 20 minutes during the 1960's. This is even though the overall time for leisure activities has not greatly increased. People also put an effort in the quality of shopping, not only the time spent in it. In the year 2002 the Finnish research organization, Tilastokeskus, studied that about 13% of Finnish women and 8% of men considered shopping fun.

(Markkanen 2008, 47, 61.)

3.3 Shopping and tourism

Shopping is among the oldest activities people do during their travels. It is important to tourism both as consumption of goods and as an entertaining activity. Without arguing shopping has a great economic benefit to the region but it can also be one of the main attractions for tourists. Big cities with famous shopping streets and small tourist shopping villages side by side compete on the tourism market offering their services.

(Murphy, Benckendorff, Moscardo & Pearce 2011, 1.)

There are different statistical indicators revealing how important shopping is as a tourist activity. Shopping as a destination choice or reason to travel and levels of expenditure or participation are good measures for the study. Tourists may reserve as much as one third of their total travel budget for shopping in the destination. There are also many studies revealing that shopping is one of the most popular activities during travel, for both domestic and international travelers. (Murphy et al 2011, 4-5; Oh 2007, 14.)

According to Pine & Gilmore (2011) people buy certain goods as tangible memories of the experiences they want to remember. For example that is why travelers buy postcards from their visited destinations. The value of the item may therefore be much greater than the actual cost of it. It is the intangible nature of the experience that drives people keeping such memorabilia. Without something tangible representing the cherished memory there is a risk of this memory to be forgotten. (Pine & Gilmore 2011, 85.)

Tourism memorabilia, also called souvenirs, is a term for products, often commercially produced, that are bought by tourists in tourism destinations to remind them of their experiences. The range of these products is very wide. Some non-commercial items, such as sea shells

or tickets can also be considered as souvenirs. The sales of such items have their own role and significance within tourism. (Morgan et al 2010, 202.)

Another reason for buying such memorabilia is because people want to present their experiences to others. “Memorabilia are the way to ‘socialize’ the experience, to transmit parts of it to others” (Pine & Gilmore 2011, 85). Keeping these kinds of tangible memories from travel helps generating conversation about the experience, for example. These items are also a way to extend experiences. (Pine & Gilmore 2011, 85-86.)

A large number of tourists buy souvenirs or gifts from their journeys. In the beginning of 2000's it was suggested that 70% of U.S. travelers bought souvenirs. In some cultures such as in Japan, there are even strict traditions of gift purchase. This can be considered another motivational factor for shopping in travel destinations. Not only the gifts for others but also souvenirs for oneself should be considered. (Murphy et al 2011, 10.)

It seems that people throughout history have bought some kind of memorabilia from their travels. Earliest signs of acquisition of travel memorabilia can be found in ancient Egyptian pyramids and other monuments. Religious pilgrimage could be the most widely accepted as the origin of souvenirs. Since parts of the holy places could not be given away endlessly without destroying the sites, the productions of different tokens symbolizing the place started to compensate it. This may have been the beginning of purposefully manufactured souvenirs. (Timothy 2005, 99; Morgan et al 2010, 203.)

Timothy (2005) presents in his book an older study identifying different souvenir types. Pictorial souvenirs are all kinds of prints and pictures that offer a visual memory of the destination, such as postcards or books. Another type of souvenirs is actual parts of the local environment like rocks, animal bones or wood. Then are the symbolic items that present the destination with images or messages of the place where they were being bought. These can be miniatures of famous attractions or even functional items. As a comparison to the symbolic items there are also the types of souvenirs that have no real connection to the destination but present a logo or maybe the name of the destination printed on it. The final type of souvenirs is the local products. These can vary from local culture food to regional clothing and handicrafts. (Timothy 2005, 100-101.)

Tourist shopping segmentation studies indicate that there is a connection in tourist shopping behavior and travel motivation. In many studies there is clearly a group of people who use shopping as a means of understanding or experiencing the destination culture. If the tourists consider shopping as a favored activity on its own it often reflects their general shopping hab-

its as a leisure activity. Whenever there are serious shoppers there is also a group not interested in shopping at all. (Murphy et al 2011, 7-9.)

4 Lahti

Lahti as a city and tourism destination was selected to be the target city for this thesis because of convenience and because of the fact it seemed suitable for the research purposes. The city of Lahti itself locates in the county Päijät-Häme in Southern-Finland. Currently it has a little under 104 000 inhabitants while being the ninth largest city in Finland. (Lahti 2013.)

Lahti as a tourism destination had 114 596 overnights between January 2013 and August 2013. 75.5% of these overnights were registered for domestic visitors and 24.5% for international visitors. The latest statistics from September 2013 gives 42 286 overnights for the Päijät-Häme region of which 90.7% is for domestic visitors and 9.3% for international visitors. The share for Lahti out of the total number of visitors is roughly between 35 to 45 per cent. (Tilastokeskus 2013.)

Major assets of Lahti city to lure tourists are widely known sights, for instance the Ski jumping towers, The Sibelius Hall and other cultural assets, the imminence of Lake Vesijärvi and the surrounding nature. Encompassing shopping possibilities in Lahti attract tourists especially from Southern-Finland such as Helsinki and its surrounding cities. Straight Allegro train connection between St. Petersburg (Russia) and Helsinki also brings numerous Russian tourists to Lahti while it is one of the stations before the end stop.

The following section of this Bachelor's thesis goes more into detail about Lahti from several viewpoints. The main topics of this section view Lahti in general and Lahti as a tourism destination. Different tourism-related issues and services have been dealt with. Last there will be a chapter for the actual shopping possibilities in Lahti. This information as a whole should provide the reader enough information to understand how tourism works in this destination and possibly give hints how the environment of the destination affects the shopping behavior of tourists in Lahti particularly.

4.1 Lahti in general

After the destructive fire of 1877 the village of Lahti was built completely again. Formal city rights Lahti received in 1905, though Lahti area had had city-like colonization even before

that. That is also the official year of foundation. Currently, being over a hundred-years-old, Lahti has a little under 104 000 residents and so it is the ninth largest city in Finland. (Lahti 2013.)

After receiving the city rights Lahti quickly turned to be built out of stone and other modern materials. The contemporary structure base is mainly (over 90 percent) from the time after the wars. By its characteristics Lahti is quite a modern city with many different layers from different time eras and their ideals. A local architect Unto Ojonen (1909-1977) has designed tens of the buildings located downtown Lahti, therefore having the most influence on how Lahti and the cityscape have taken form. (Ardin, Pietiläinen & Papinaho 2013, 5.)

During times and today Lahti can be described through various characteristics. It is not only stone and concrete but it has landscape with many lakes, verdant parks and the nature. It is a city of eskers and the Salpausselkä ridge. With the up and down hills Lahti is like San Francisco of Finland, city built on a hill is eloquent. There are plantings of trees almost everywhere you go; Lahti could be called a green city. Lahti is also number one in sorting, recycling and utilization in Finland. (Ardin et al 2013, 5, 8-9.)

Lahti is not only nature and verdant landscapes. It is also a city of business; in fact the term “business city” was made up by city brand builders during the 1980s when Finland was under the influence of upswing. During that time the term was not exaggerated at all. Lahti citizens were used to being materially independent as being an industrial town with many merchants everything was right there available to be purchased. There were well known furniture manufacturers and industry for household appliances. To mention some more examples, the town had its own brewery as well as many bakeries and clothing providers. (Ardin et al 2013, 7.)

During that time most of the people in the Lahti region earned their living in local enterprises. Today the most of the industry has gone and the old brands only live in names but they still have their impact on the business climate. Nowadays Lahti aims to be a business friendly and supportive city for technology driven businesses. Lahti has also been compactly attached to Helsinki metropolitan working area because of its location within a reasonable travelling distance from downtown Helsinki. By the means of it, approximately half of the population in Finland lives within 200 kilometers of Lahti. (Ardin et al 2013, 7.)

Lahti then is mostly known abroad for sports, especially winter sports. The ski jumping towers and their silhouettes are a major part of the Lahti cityscape. Other than being huge sports fans, Lahti citizens are actively doing various sports such as skiing during winters, walking, cycling and Nordic walking whenever weather allows it. Of course Lahti also has its own representatives in many sports on the national levels. The local hockey team is called Pelicans,

FC Lahti represents football and Namika Lahti goes for basketball. In fact, the residents of Lahti are quite eager to set up and play teams sports on their own, in Kortteliliiga, which is a local sports association or on lower level divisions. (Ardin et al 2013, 11-13.)

In addition to sports there are arts. Culturally speaking Lahti symphony orchestra and the Sibelius Hall are the strongest and best known brands from Lahti. There are also several musically oriented school classes and conservatoire which have given many young talents an excellent start for their career. Even though the golden era of furniture industry is long gone, Lahti congress and concert centre (the Sibelius Hall) in point of fact is one of its kind what comes to wooden design and combining it to modern metal elements. Also theatre, design and arts are an integral part of Lahti identity. (Ardin et al 2013, 11-14.)

4.2 Lahti as a tourism destination

The World Tourism Organization UNWTO defines tourism (also tourist) destination as following: “destination of a tourism trip is defined as a place visited that is central to the decision to take the trip” (UNWTO 2013). The upcoming sections deal with Lahti as a tourism destination more deeply. Main points are the transport connections, accommodation, attractions and activities the tourists are able to participate in.

While Lahti is a versatile tourism destination, ranging from summers’ natural beauty to winters’ coldness and snow, it is a city which places trust on several happenings. Events such as Finlandia-hiihto, Lahti Winter Games and Summer Up gather (tens of) thousands of visitors to Lahti every year. Both international and domestic visitors find many of the events and attractions in Lahti highly interesting.

4.2.1 Connections

Lahti is reachable mainly in two ways. The city itself is located in Southern Finland, approximately 100 kilometers from Helsinki to north. Since Lahti does not have an airport of its own the easiest way to get to Lahti is either by road or rail. The highway number 4, also known as Europe 75, leads right past Lahti when arriving from south or north. Public transports, buses and trains, take travelers from Helsinki to Lahti in between an hour and two hours depending on which way of transport one chooses. (Lahden kaupunki 2013.)

By the means of it Helsinki-Vantaa international airport is also an hour away from Lahti and it is quite easy for tourists from abroad to arrive to Lahti by public transport. Also the Allegro trains from Russia stop at Lahti railway station. In east to west and west to east direction the

highway 12 crosses Lahti and brings travelers from Hämeenlinna, Turku and other cities in Western Finland and Kouvola, Lappeenranta and others in Eastern Finland. (Lahden kaupunki 2013.)

4.2.2 Accommodation

When staying in Lahti area for longer than just one day there are several different options for accommodation. These alternate from hotels to hostels, from mansions to bed and breakfast settings and from cottages to camping sites. There is also a possibility to choose couch surfing and a few other special options. (Lahti Region 2013.)

Between January 2013 and August 2013 there were a total of 114 596 overnights in Lahti which was 11.8 per cent less than the year before. There were 86 564 national overnights, about 75.5% from total, which was 7.3 per cent less than the year before. For international overnights the number was 28 032 and 23.5 per cent less than the year before. (Tilastokeskus 2013.)

The downtown hotels available in Lahti could be divided into bigger and smaller ones. Sokos Hotel Seurahuone, Scandic Lahti and Cumulus Lahti represent the larger hotel chains. These hotels offer traditional accommodation services and rooms as well as superior rooms. They have also conference facilities and offer food and beverages in their own bars and restaurants. Sokos Hotel Seurahuone which locates on the main street is very traditional on its style. Hotel Scandic can be found right next to the railway station of Lahti and the recently renewed Cumulus just a stone throw away from the shopping center Trio. (Lahti Region 2013.)

The other hotels to mention there are spread around the city center as well. Kauphotelli Grand operates in co-operation with Lahti Music Academy and holds an auditorium with the capacity of seats for 225 persons. Like many other cities, Lahti also has its own receptionless Omena hotel, located right next to the market square which provides a short distance to every service in the downtown area. For those looking for a cozy, homelike experience in a hotel, there is a hotel called Musta Kissa. Another option to pick is an apartment hotel Forenom House, in which customers get their room keys in a form of text message and are able to enter their rooms this way. (Lahti Region 2013.)

In addition to the traditional hotels, there are some other accommodation options in Lahti area. The Messilä mansion (in Hollola) offers capacity for a maximum of 235 persons. There are rooms in the actual mansion but also some log cottages and granaries. Bed & breakfast is offered in Irman Peti ja Puuro which locates in the old Jalkaranta wooden house district and offers personal, authentic and idyllic setting for travelers. Metsola Center Oy, located ap-

proximately 6 kilometers from Lahti centre offers cottages in eight different sizes for tourists and travelers to rent for holidays or to be used for weddings, family parties and company events. (Lahti Region 2013.)

The ones looking for cheaper or even free accommodation can look for couch surfing communities. According to couchsurfing.org community there were approximately 700 different hosts in Lahti area offering their home for accommodation purposes. This option allows travelers easily to meet local people and travel with smaller budget. (Couchsurfing.org) Camping sites in Lahti area are located at Mukkula and Herrasmanni which both offer cottages and tent and caravan spots. (Lahti Region 2013.)

4.2.3 Fairs and happenings

Lahti is not only nature and shopping but in addition it has plenty of different fairs, exhibitions and happenings all year-round. Perhaps the most well-known event is Salpauselän kisat (The Lahti Ski Games) which is held every year between late February and early March. Not only the Ski Games bring several nationalities from abroad to compete in winter sports in Lahti but it also lures plenty of tourists from Finland and also abroad to watch them. These annual Ski Games contain partial races in world cup. During that time hotels in Lahti are usually fully booked and the reservations must have been done well in advance. All the events are located within a walking distance of the city centre. (Lahti Region 2013.)

Another winter sports event is the annual Finlandia-hiihto which gathers masses of people into the largest skiing event in Finland. Usually it is held between February and March while the route is arranged to go around the Lahti region. Distances for traditional and freestyle series are between 20 to 50 kilometers. Finlandia-hiihto is also a part of the international Worldloppet skiing series. (Lahti Region 2013.)

During the summer time one of the most known happenings is the annual Summer Up festival which brings urban music artists into Mukkula, Lahti and it is held in early July. (Lahti Region 2013) According to Etelä-Suomen Sanomat (2013) over 60 per cent of visitors of big happenings are other than Lahti residents and on a yearly basis they bring and spend over 3 million Euros. During bigger sports events tourist from outside Lahti also tend to stay overnight in some of the hotels, hostels and such. (Etelä-Suomen Sanomat 2013.)

On the fair, exhibition and festival field there are several events for citizens and also for tourists to attend. To mention few of them, there is for instance the annual Christmas Market, the Sibelius festival and the Classic Motorshow. All these lure plenty of visitor every year from around and Finland and abroad. (Lahti Region 2013.)

4.2.4 Museums, concerts and theatre

The Lahti city theatre, designed by Pekka Salminen, is one of the biggest theaters in Finland and the main theatre in Lahti. Its program consists of musicals, music and conversational plays and plays arranged by children and youth. The building itself offers premises for arranging concerts and conferences. The lobbies and hallways can be used for smaller scale meetings and parties. (Lahti Region 2013.)

Theatre Vanha Juko is a professional theatre established into an old cinema building in 1995. Nowadays it offers conversational plays, stand-up comedy, sing along nights and guest performances. The operation in the theatre is mostly based on permanent plays. The building itself is classified as a museum sight and is therefore protected. (Lahti Region 2013.)

Symphony Lahti is the official city orchestra arranging all sorts of plays from Christmas concerts to classical music concerts. In Lahti their home base is the Sibelius hall but they also do tours in different cities and concert halls. The Finlandia club at the Sibelius Hall, on the other hand, hosts concerts of various rock music bands. (Lahti Region 2013, Sinfonia Lahti 2013.)

Lahti offers history in many different forms. The Ski Museum, which is located right next to the sports stadium and the ski jumps, is the most visited one. Lahti Historical Museum, Art Museum, Motorcycle Museum and Radio- & TV Museum offer more alternative activities. Slightly less known museums in Lahti are the Paddling Museum and the Hospital Museum. (Lahti Region 2013.)

4.2.5 Sightseeing

Despite its fairly small size, what comes to the actual city area, Lahti has plenty of sights to spot. On the other hand short walking distances from place to another allow tourists and visitors to see more only by walking around and in less amount of time. Majority of the sights in Lahti are also free to visit without any entry fees, disregarding some of the museums. (Kallio, Niskanen, Rautjoki, Savolainen & Siikaniemi 2007.)

The Sports Center is most likely the most often visited sight amongst tourists. The Church of the Cross, Ristinkirkko in Finnish, and the City Hall represent architecture of some of the most well known Finnish designers. The old Radio masts are part of major Lahti history and a well noticeable landmark of the city. The passenger harbor and the Sibelius Hall are also

worth seeing, especially in the summer time when there is constantly something going on there. Some tourists may also be interested in the various statues around the city. (Kallio et al 2007.)

4.2.6 Future plans and projects

Lahti Technical and Environmental division Trafix has started the preparations for building a new traffic centre (Matkakeskus) in contact with the already existing railway station. The first actual step towards the new centre was already in 2006 fall when the Kerava-Lahti rail shortcut was opened for operation. The actual building will start in summer 2014 and is estimated to finish in the autumn 2015. The traffic centre would be consisting of the railway station and a new long haul bus terminal. (Lahden kaupunki 2013.)

Also a hotel- spa complex has been planned for Lahti for years. This would greatly boost tourism and also help accommodating the visitors of the big, yearly events. In 2010 the planning finally went a little further when the inquest for changing the city plan was started. The early plans were ready for examination in late 2012. (Yle Uutiset 2010, Lahden kaupunki 2014.)

4.3 Shopping possibilities in Lahti

Lahti is a great pick as a shopping destination. It has plenty of small boutiques which cannot be found anywhere else, all within a walking distance from each other. The best places to find purchases for one's needs can be found in the city center, on Aleksanterinkatu, Hämeenkatu, Vesijärvenkatu and Rautatienkatu streets. One can find almost anything between unique gifts or decoration products and personalized clothing. A brave wanderer can find even more stores around the city. (Ardin, Pietiläinen & Papinaho 2013, 19.)

As a contrast to the various street side stores and boutiques, there are several shopping centers for tourists to visit in Lahti. The shopping centre Trio, located right in the downtown Lahti, on the main street. It is also one of the biggest malls in Finland. Shopping centre Karisma is a newly built mall right next to highway 4/E75 in Karisto district, Lahti. It holds almost 80 different stores and is easy to reach either by public transport or by car. Other shopping centers found in Lahti are Hämeen Helmi, Liike, Maili, Syke and Valo. All these centers are smaller, containing a fewer amount of shops, often including shops for basic needs in groceries, clothing and other every day purchases such as medicines. (Lahti Region 2013)

Not only there are several shopping malls around Lahti, but also many factory outlets from various manufacturers. Perhaps the most known of them are garment manufacturer Luhta with two different factory outlets in Lahti (one in Renkomäki district and one in Laune) and

Iittala Group manufacturing glass objects known worldwide. Other outlets found in Lahti are for example the candle manufacturer FinnMari Oy, Fazer Leipomot with its bakery products, and Päijät-Hämeen Tuoterengas manufacturing the well-known Finnish game “Mölkky”.

(Lahti Region 2013)

Mentionable assets for shopping in Lahti are the many different decoration, handicrafts and lifestyle shops and boutiques. One should not, of course, forget Lahti market square (Lahden kauppatori) and Lahti market hall (Lahden Kauppahalli) which sell seasonal and locally produced goods. The museums, especially the Ski museum, sell gift and souvenir-type items. (Lahti Region 2013) As a note from the writer, the overall offer of purposeful souvenirs is small. With the knowledge of writer’s own experience at the tourist information, tourists often fail to find the kind of souvenirs they would have preferred to buy.

5 Research process

This chapter explains the research process from planning to evaluation of the results. Firstly the basis for the research process is being opened to the reader. Then there is a part which describes the conduction of the survey and the occurring settings. One part of the chapter has been reserved for presentation of the results of the survey, visualizing the main points with different charts. Finally the results have been interpreted and evaluated, also paying attention to the validity and reliability of the results.

5.1 Planning

The theme for the thesis was chosen based on personal interests of the writers. Shopping has always been a visible part of travelling from their perspective and therefore sparked the idea of studying the phenomena wider. The overall idea of measuring shopping interest of tourists all over was quite wide, so the planning went under series of condensing. The theme was narrowed to studying shopping motivation and purchases of tourists during travel in a specified destination, which was chosen, for convenience, Lahti; the hometown of the researchers.

Since there was no commission from an outer source for the thesis, the timetable and planning for the thesis were made based on the limitations and possibilities of the researchers. The theory aspects were chosen carefully to support the research aims. Shopping viewed from different perspectives naturally formed the very core of the theory. Additionally the phenomenon of experiences was chosen to broaden the perspective as well as because of the fact that shopping, tourism and experiences are naturally connected.

The quantitative survey was planned the theory of shopping in mind. The first part of the questionnaire consisted of background information about the respondent. The most important factor was to find out if the respondent had done any research considering shopping in the destination before the travel. The following sections aimed to find out what and where the tourists had been purchasing (do people buy tourism memorabilia, gifts etc?), if locally made products are important for them, if they make a budget for shopping (plan to shop), what is their overall opinion on shopping while travelling and satisfaction with their purchases.

The schedule of the research was aimed to be loose. Anchors for the thesis process were to conduct the research during the high season of tourism, summer, and to finish the evaluation in the autumn. The survey was intended to be carried out in the Tourist information point of Lahti while one of the researchers was working there as an intern. It was also planned to seek co-operation with local accommodation providers to effectively reach tourists. The assumption was that no local residents would use such services and therefore tourists could be reached easily.

5.2 The Survey

The collection of answers started in June, 2013. The questionnaire was both in English and Finnish to enable as many foreigners to understand the questions as well as the domestic travelers easily to answer it on their native language. The form was in printed version as well as in electronic form, so the respondents would have a choice whether to directly answer it or to do it later. It seemed that many tourists came first to the tourist information point to find out what to do, so they had not bought anything yet, making it an undesired moment to answer the survey.

Despite a number of contacts to local accommodation providers, none of them agreed or even responded to the co-operation requests. This fact narrowed greatly the acquisition of answers. To increase the chances slightly, seemingly foreign or non-local customers of the other researcher's regular job were offered the questionnaire. At the tourist information the questionnaire was targeted to any non-local visitors. Some visitors refused to answer the survey, some were unable to communicate sufficiently well in English to understand the questions and some were very willing to answer. The other researcher was available to help and clarify the questions if necessary in real-time answering situations.

Approximately half of the received answers were made on paper and half of questionnaires were filled in the internet. Most of the respondents were foreign even though no special group was favored over the other. Possibly the fact of mostly foreign tourists using the tourist

information point could explain this. The collection of answers was finished in the end of September. The high tourist season was clearly over as well as the internship ended. Due to a fortunate event, two more answers were received later in November. It seemed appropriate to add these answers since no work towards evaluating the results had yet been done. All in all, the number of answers was finally 48. This was disappointing for the researchers, but taking the fact that the original plan for answer acquisition failed because of factors that could not be altered, it had to suffice.

5.3 Survey results

A total of 48 answers were given for this survey and further on this number will represent the 100% of the respondents. The results will be presented in the same order they appear as questions in the questionnaire. The chapter has also been divided into same categories as the survey. There are some mentions on the notes the researchers made while gathering together answers regarding misunderstandings or possible reasons for certain answers.

Background information

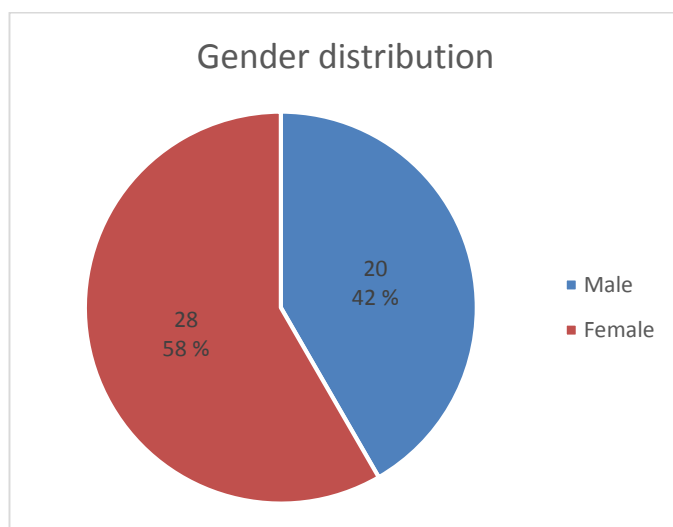


Figure 4: Gender distribution

A little under two thirds (58%) of the respondents were female while a bit over one third (42%) were male. (Figure 4)

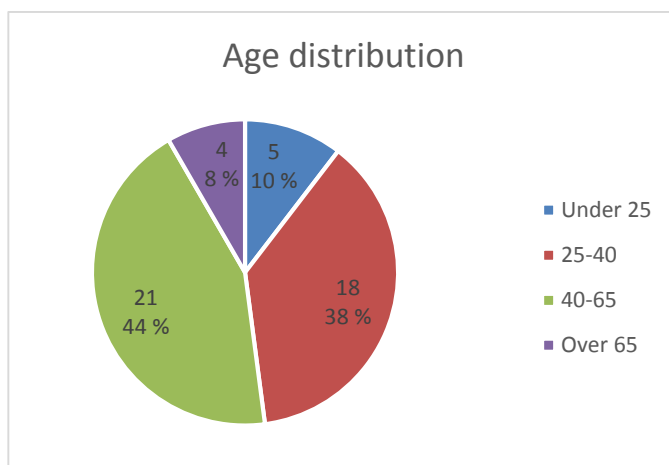


Figure 5: Age distribution

Majority of the respondents were placed into two different age categories. There were approximately two fifths (38%) of the respondents in between 25 and 40 years of age as well as in between 40 and 65 years (44%) of age. Only around ten per cent of the respondents announced their age as under 25 (10%) or over 65 (8%). (Figure 5)

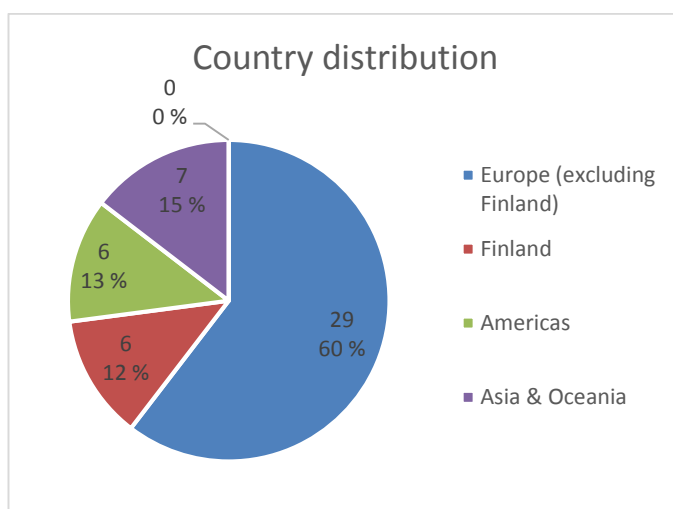


Figure 6: Country distribution

Over half (60%) of the tourists in this survey visiting Lahti were from some of the European countries (excluding Finland). These countries were for example Germany, Austria and Poland. A little over 10 percent (12%) of the respondents were from Finland. Cities represented were, for example, Rovaniemi and Pietarsaari. Somewhat over 10 percent of respondents were either Asians (15%) or Americans (13%). Australia and the United States were the most represented countries. (Figure 6)

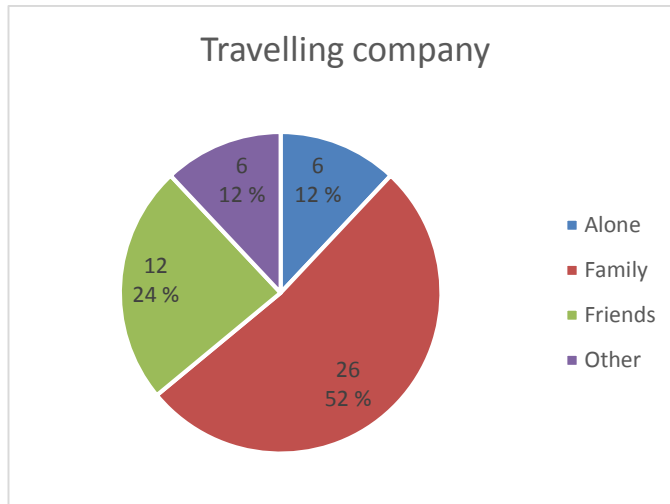


Figure 7: Travelling company

A sheer majority of the respondents (52%) told they were travelling with their families. Both alone (12%) and with “other” (12%) company was the way to travel for approximately ten per-cent of the respondents. Nearly a quarter (24%) responded that they were travelling with their friends. In this occasion other company usually stated for partner in a form of married couple or with a boyfriend or a girlfriend. (Figure 7)

On average the respondents travelled with another person. 23 out of 48 respondents (48%) stated that they are travelling in a group of two while nine respondents (19%) stated they had a company of three persons. Otherwise there were some groups of four to eight people and those who travelled alone.

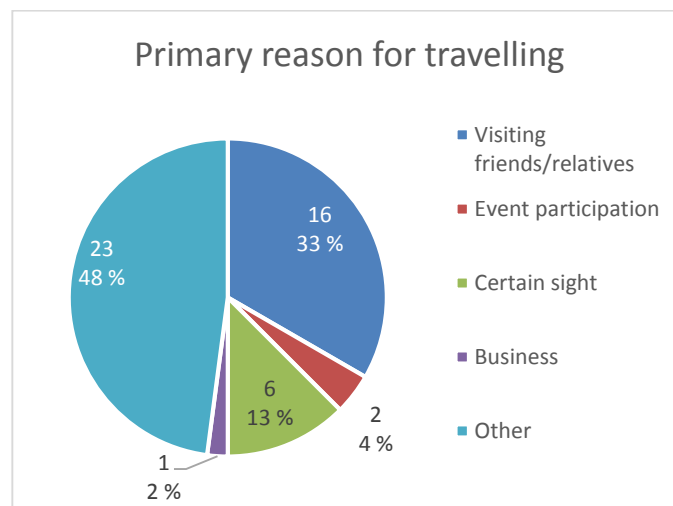


Figure 8: Primary reason for travelling

A third (33%) of the respondents announced they would be visiting their friends and/or family as a primary reason for their trip. Seeing a certain sight then was the main reason for a little

over tenth (13%) of the respondents. Only one (2%) visitor stated he/she would be taking apart in a business event while event participation was the primary reason for only two (4%) respondents. For almost half (48%) of the respondents “other” reasons were the main ones for coming to Lahti. Holidays, road trips and tourism as such were the major specifications in the group of other. (Figure 8)

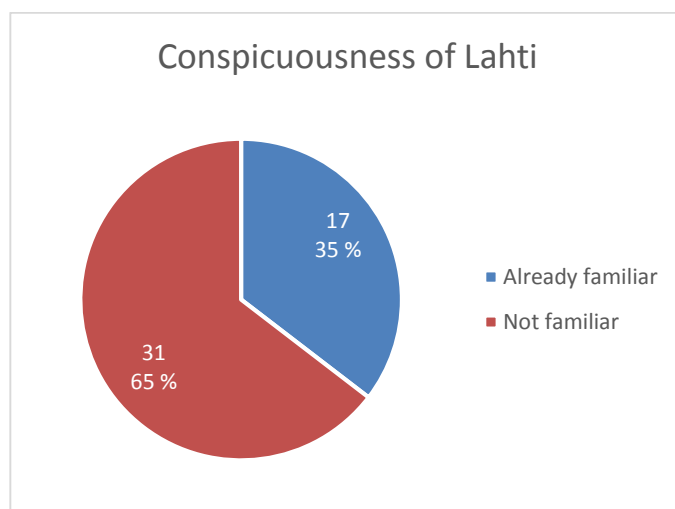


Figure 9: Conspicuousness of Lahti

Approximately two thirds (65%) of the respondents stated they were not familiar with Lahti before their journey. The rest (35%) of the respondents told they were already somewhat familiar with Lahti. From those who were not already familiar with Lahti nine (29%) respondents said they looked for information about Lahti and its shopping possibilities. While answering this question, people often seemed to ignore the shopping part of the question and focused on general information. The remaining 22 respondents (71%) did not look for information. (Figure 9)

The information about Lahti was found in many different sources and the respondents were able to choose more than one option. The information gathered was acquired both before and during their trips. Internet was a source for the majority of the respondents with a total of 22 (46%) responses. Eight respondents (17%) also found information either from books or from brochures/leaflets. Magazines were a source of information in only five of the answers (10%). Ten respondents (21%) also told they received information from other people. Other sources of information were used by five (10%) respondents. Another source was mentioned as for example city/tourist info.

Shopping at your destination

It seems that everyone but one respondent bought at least something during his/her trip. One respondent did not include any details of products or shops but stated shopping being the main reason for his/her trip and estimated using 2500 Euros for shopping during the trip. This could well support the presumption that shopping is an integral part of tourism. Food was the most common category of purchases. Some of the answers were clearly in wrong categories and they were moved to the right ones by the researchers.

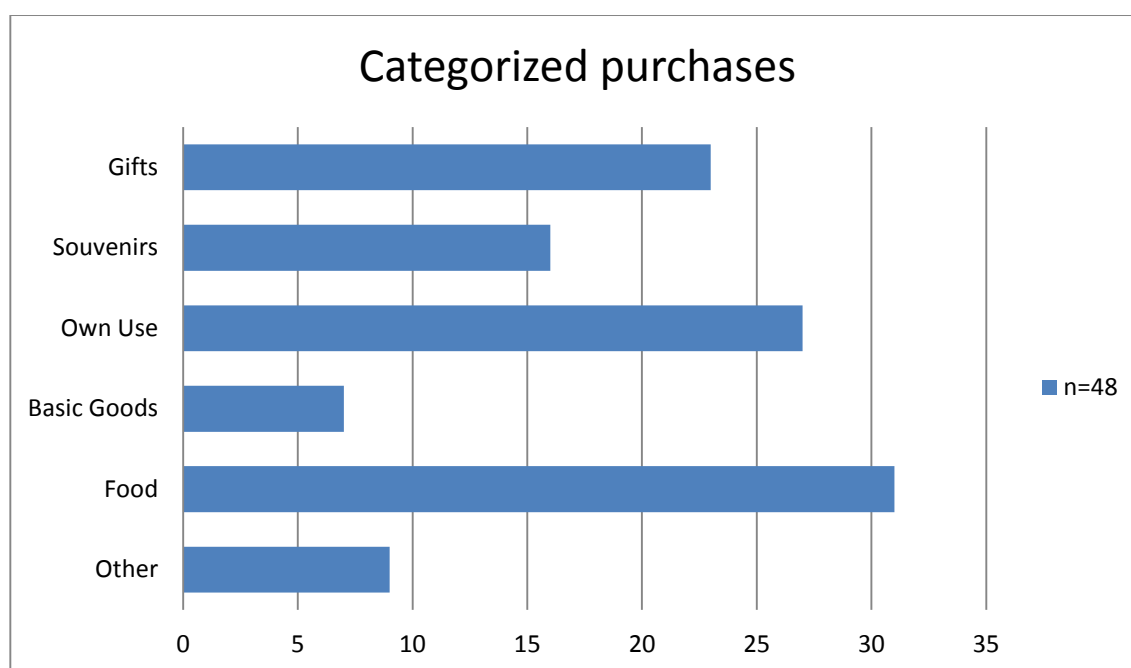


Figure 10: Categorized purchases

As seen in figure 10 a little less than half, 23 people, bought gifts from their trip. There were three main purchase groups, candy/chocolate (12), clothing (7) and gift/souvenir type items (11). The majority of people who bought gifts for others also bought souvenirs for themselves. 16 people bought souvenirs for themselves, one third of total. 11 of them had clearly bought typical souvenir items, like key rings, magnets, mugs or post cards. Other categories were accessories and jewelry, edible things and other items of use.

27 people (56% of total) bought something for themselves. 78% of them bought clothing and 41% shoes. These were clearly the most popular purchases and some of the respondents had bought both. Seven people bought other items to be used by themselves at home. Also seven of the respondents said they had bought some basic needs items, such as bandages, body lotion, medicine, sheets or toothpaste. Two respondents in other categories said they had bought a prepaid mobile phone card, which was categorized as an answer of this category instead of the wrong one.

31 respondents (65%) bought some food during their trip. This category excluded ready-made meals at restaurants and such, so mostly these purchases were snacks for the travelling party. 9 respondents categorized some of their purchases in “Other” section. Postcards & stamps as well as items bought to a child who is part of the respondent’s travelling party, were mentioned a few times.

Shopping places

Despite the given instruction to mention store names, people answered the question regarding their shopping place very differently. 11 answers did not include any store names but types of stores or shopping centers, 9 mentioned some names and then overall description and 22 listed store names as asked. 6 people did not mention any places they did purchases in at all.

Generally the answers could be sorted by the type of the shops. Specialized shops, like clothing shops, museum shops, handicrafts shops etc. were mentioned. There were also department stores, like Robinhood or Sokos. One type of stores was supermarkets or food stores. Often respondents also mentioned shopping centers, which represent often all kinds of special shops. Even kiosks or flea markets were mentioned. This listing could be interpreted so, that tourists use various different stores for purchasing if they are available at the destination.

Locally made

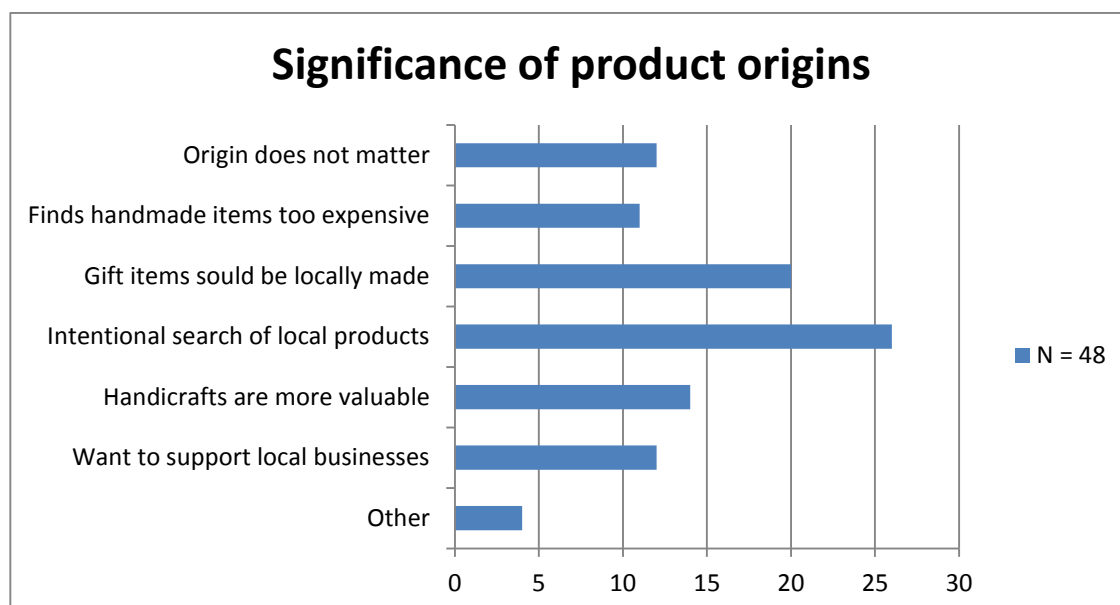


Figure 11: Significance of product origins

When asked about the significance of product origins when making a decision for purchases the answers varied quite a bit. For 20 respondent (42%) gifts items they buy should be locally made and a bit more than half (54%) of the respondents always at least try to look for locally made products. A bit under one third (29%) considered handicrafts more valuable than mass made products. (Figure 11)

A quarter (25%) of the respondents thought that the origin does not matter. A little under a quarter (23%) then told they would happily buy handicrafts if they were not so expensive. A quarter (25%) of the respondents also expresses how they admire people making handicrafts and would like to support their work by buying those products. A little under one tenth (8%) found other reasons more important when making a purchase decision. This can be for example a signature in local language or a local beer always to seek.

Estimated expenditure

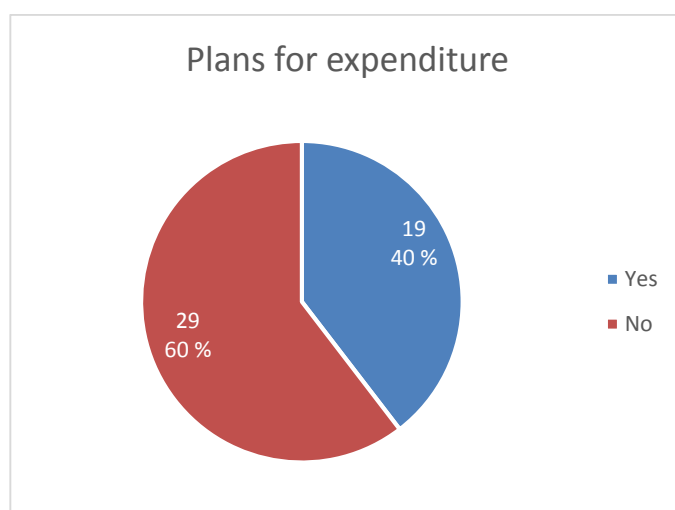


Figure 12: Plans for expenditure

Majority (60%) did not make any plans for how they would be using money during their trip. Two fifths (40%) of the respondents announced they had made some plans for their expenditure before the trip. The intended sums varied all the way from 100 Euros to 4000 Euros. Some stated their intentions with such words as “enough” and “as much as I can afford”. (Figure 12)

Average costs of purchases also varied significantly, being everything between a moderate two Euros purchase to 80 Euros purchase. These amounts can be seen to concern both single item purchases and purchases including several items. Highest value for a purchase also varied from a moderately low 15 Euros to quite high 410 Euros. It is notable that the answers were given at any random point during one’s journey. This can result in lower sums in total

and in single purchases if an answer was given at early point. This also the main reason why the stated amounts for money so far used varied significantly from 15 Euros to 2600 Euros.

Shopping as an experience



Figure 13: Main reasons for shopping in a destination

According to the responses listed in figure 13, local specialities, souvenirs and gifts were most often behind the motivation for shopping in a destination. Over half of the respondents (56%) wanted to buy something they cannot find at home. 19 respondents (40%) wanted to buy something tangible to remember their journey later on while 20 respondents (42%) also felt that they have to buy something to take home for people waiting there. For a little less than quarter (23%) shopping is an essential part of getting to know a destination.

Buying products only for need is the way to go for as many as a third (33%) of the respondents. Fifth of the respondents (19%) also wanted to support local businesses and economy. Tenth (10%) of them stated that shopping possibilities are the main reason when choosing a destination while 8 of the respondents (17%) thought that shopping was a good option if there is not much else to do. Two respondents specified their reasons to buy something as “other”. Only one person (2%) told that he usually buys nothing.

Often the favorite purchases were clothing or accessories. Also several edible things were mentioned. Given reasons were mostly connected with money or inexpensiveness of the product and the fact that those items are not available in their home country. 18 respondents (38%) had named his/her favorite purchase and given an explanation for the choice. 22 re-

spondents (45%) had only given an answer for the actual favorite item, not for the reason. 8 people (17%) had not answered the question.

A majority of the respondents, 30 people (63%), did not mention anything they felt they were left without. 18 people (37%) on the other hand, felt that something was missing. Almost half of these wishes considered souvenirs, local crafts and postcards. The other half of the wishes were very random, varying from children's clothes to cheap coffee.

5.4 Evaluation, validity and reliability of the research

Due to the fact that there were low amount of responses to the survey, no mentionable conclusions can be made of the background of these people. Possibly the fact that most people travelled with company may have affected the leisure aspect of shopping positively, since shopping can often be seen as a social activity. Since majority of the travelers were European, no comparison between nationalities from different continents or parts of the world could be made.

As everyone but one person participating in this survey bought something, it could be said that shopping indeed has its place among activities during travels. Food as snacks and sweets was the most common purchase, but this survey supports the theories of souvenir and gift purchases still being important for travelers. Purchases for own use being popular as well could indicate that these respondents' usual shopping behavior is repeated also during travel. Women made seemingly more purchases in general than men in this survey.

When it comes to the origins of tourist's purchases, it seems that there is demand for locally made products. Many respondents thought that gift type items should be local crafts of the destination and they intentionally try to seek such kind of items. Certain value was also weighed on crafts compared to mass-made products. This could be good news for local producers: they could find new business opportunities by aiming their product offer into commonly visited tourist destinations or spots.

Over half of the respondents did not make any expenditure plans for the trip. This could mean, that they are more likely to make spontaneous purchases compared to if they had a budget. It is, of course, possible that the budget includes a part for this too. The definitions of one's budget limits may also be fairly loose. All in all, the sums used for shopping vary based on countless of personal factors.

The experiential nature of shopping comes into picture in the last section of the survey. This survey follows the common theories of people using purchases made on a trip as a means of extending the experience after returning home. Finding new things uncommon in the traveler's natural environment and exploring the destination are also linked with shopping, even though many respondents also stated they bought items for actual needs. Therefore it should be reminded that shopping is not always the same as purchasing something.

Even though the number of responses for the survey was relatively low, it still offers a suggestive perspective for the topic and confirms the theory of shopping being an important part of tourism. According to this research tourists seem to be taking part of shopping to at least some extent. Because the results of this survey support the research assumption it could be said that at least this destination choice did not significantly influence the results.

Validity of the research is measured by evaluating how well the research results answer the intended research questions (Vilkka 2007, 150). The questionnaire was evaluated by a third person and considered appropriate. During the answer-gathering process it seemed that one of the questions was interpreted slightly differently by the foreign travelers as intended. Generally, though, the overall answers could be considered matching the questions. Seemingly some of the respondents did not thoroughly understand some questions because of a language barrier. Due to the small scale of the research there is a larger possibility for randomness in the seemingly fitting answers. Therefore real validity of the research is questionable.

Reliability of the research comes from the stability of the answers regardless of how many times the research is being repeated (Vilkka 2007, 149). In this specific case, the reliability is hard to evaluate because of the very small scale of the research. At the moment there is no intention to re-implement the survey, either. Some adjustments could be made to the survey in order to specify some of the questions.

6 Conclusion

This research process gave the researchers comprehensive understanding of the connection of shopping, experiences and tourism. It is a complex phenomenon and cannot, possibly ever, be fully understood. The survey, however, gave concrete evidence of the theories being applicable in real-life situations, even though the results could be only seen in subjective perspective. All in all, the writers feel that the research problem was sufficiently reflected.

In the beginning of the information research, the researchers felt that the subject of their study had been quite little examined. At first, it seemed hard to find enough examples in lit-

erature, but the further the study went on, the more information could be found. It was interesting how easily major points of the theories then formed the basis for the survey questions. The survey then was fairly easy to conduct and it was the interpretation of the results that required more work and focus. Unfortunately not all of the results were usable, due to the randomness of the few given.

Writing a Bachelor's thesis was a challenging process. Information research and professional writing needed most attention and work. Through this process the writers learned how to form a thesis and how to conduct a survey. The research also taught the writers much more about the relevance of shopping in the tourism industry and the basic shopping behavior of tourists. They also came to a conclusion that the destination offer is connected to the shopping behavior.

Even though the researchers find the results of the research fairly successful, there is always room for improvement. In terms of the whole process, they think that the schedule could have been clearer. It could have optimized the use of time in the writing process. Maybe, if contacted much earlier, the accommodation providers would have at least answered to the request of the writers. There are also some details in the survey which could have been done slightly differently. Some of the questions in English could have been clearer, since it seems that not every respondent understood them correctly. On the other hand, if there had been more language option, the questions may have been better understood. This would have required better language skills or help with translations, which in this case was not an option.

To conclude the thoughts concerning the thesis process, the researchers are quite pleased with the result. The answer to the research problem was found and the process taught the researchers much about tourists' shopping behavior, both locally and globally. The writers feel the learning process and its outcomes can be valuable in the future and be used as an asset on their careers.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Dear visitor!

The purpose of this questionnaire is to survey shopping and its meaning for tourists and travelers as a part of their journey. The selected target is the city of Lahti and visitors there. This questionnaire will be implemented by two Degree Programme in Tourism students, Aina Domin and Lauri Halonen, from Laurea University of Applied Sciences as their thesis work.

All the acquired answers will be dealt confidentially and without any names asked. Single respondents will not stand out at any point of this research.

Please answer the questions either by ticking the boxes or by writing down on the given rows.

Background information

Gender:

- ☐ Female
☐ Male

Age:

- ☐ under 25
☐ 25-40
☐ 40-65
☐ over 65

Hometown/country:

- ☐ Finland, town: _____
☐ Foreign, country: _____

Are you travelling...

- ☐ Alone
☐ With Family
☐ With friends
☐ Other, specify: _____?

Number of occupants: _____

Purpose of your journey:

- ☐ Visiting friends/relatives
☐ Participating an event
☐ Specific attraction
☐ Business
☐ Other, specify: _____?

Is Lahti as a destination already familiar for you?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

If you answered "No", did you familiarize with Lahti and its shopping possibilities before your journey?

- ☐ Yes, I did
☐ No I did not

If you acquired information before your journey, where did you get it?

- ☐ Brochures
☐ Magazines
☐ Books
☐ Internet
☐ Advices and tips from others
☐ Other, specify: _____

Shopping at your destination

In this questionnaire, purchases are divided into sections based on their use. Please write down your purchases and place them into sections they belong to.

<u>Gifts</u>	<u>Souvenirs</u> (for yourself)	<u>Own use</u> (e.g. shoes, clothes, bags)

<u>Basic goods</u> (e.g. bandages, toothpaste to be used on the trip)	<u>Food</u> (excluding restaurants and such)	<u>Other</u>

Shopping places

Write down the stores in which you bought the goods mentioned above. Naming them will suffice.

Locally made

What is the meaning of locally produced arts and crafts for you? Does the origin of products matter?
You may choose more than one option.

- ☐ Origin does not matter as long as it is pleasing
- ☐ I would happily buy handicrafts if they were not so expensive
- ☐ Gifts should be locally made
- ☐ I always try to look for locally made products in a destination
- ☐ Handicrafts value more than mass made products
- ☐ I admire how skillful people are and I want to support them by buying their hand made products
- ☐ Other, specify _____

Estimated expenditure

Did you make any plans of expenditure before your journey?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

If you answered "Yes", how much did you reserve for shopping? _____

How much would you estimate an average purchase during the journey cost (in Euros)? _____

How much was the most valuable purchase (in Euros) you made during the journey? _____

How much money would you estimate you have used so far during the journey? _____

Shopping as an experience

What would you consider as the main reason for shopping in a destination? You may choose more than one option.

- ☐ Possibilities for shopping are the main reason for choosing a destination
☐ Lack of other things to do
☐ Shopping is an essential part of getting to know a destination
☐ I want to buy something I cannot get at home
☐ I want tangible memories from my journey
☐ The need to bring gifts for people at home
☐ I want to support local business and economy
☐ I only buy products for need
- ☐ Other, specify: _____
- ☐ I do not usually buy anything

Which of the purchases you made during this journey is the one you like best? Why?

Is there something you could not get or find during this journey but you would have wanted to have? Was there something missing?

Thank you for your time and answers!

Appendix 2

Hyvä matkailija!

Tämän kyselyn tarkoituksena on kartoittaa ostoksien tekemisen eli shoppailun merkitystä matkailijoille ja osana matkaa. Kohteeksi on valittu Lahden kaupunki ja siellä käyvät matkailijat. Tämän kyselyn toteuttavat Laurea-ammattikorkeakoulun englanninkielisen matkailun koulutusohjelman opiskelijat Aina Domin ja Lauri Halonen opinnäytetyönään. Vastaukset käsitellään luottamuksellisesti ja nimettöminä eivätkä yksittäiset vastaajat tule esille missään vaiheessa tutkimusta.

Olkaa hyvä ja vastatkaa seuraaviin kysymyksiin joko rastittamalla ruudut tai kirjoittamalla vastaukset annetuille riveille.

Taustatiedot

Sukupuoli:

- ☐ Nainen
☐ Mies

Ikä:

- ☐ alle 25
☐ 25-40
☐ 40-65
☐ yli 65 vuotta

Kotipaikka:

- ☐ Suomi, kaupunki: _____
☐ Ulkomaat, maa: _____

Matkustatteko...

- ☐ Yksin
☐ Perheen kanssa
☐ Ystävien kanssa
☐ Muu seura, mikä: _____ ?

Matkustajien lukumäärä: _____

Matkan tarkoitus:

- ☐ Vierailu sukulaisten/ystävien luona
☐ Osallistuminen tapahtumaan
☐ Tietty nähtävyys
☐ Liikematka
☐ Muu, mikä: _____ ?

Onko Lahti matkakohteena Teille entuudestaan tuttu?

- ☐ Kyllä
☐ Ei

Mikäli vastasitte edelliseen kysymykseen kieltävästi, tutustuitteko Lahden ostosmahdollisuuksiin ennen matkaanne?

- ☐ Kyllä, tutustuin
☐ En tutustunut

Jos hankitte tietoa ostosmahdollisuuksista ennen matkaa, mitä lähteitä käytitte? Voitte valita useamman vaihtoehdon.

- ☐ Esitteet
☐ Lehdet
☐ Kirjat
☐ Internet
☐ Neuvot ja vinkit toisilta ihmisiltä
☐ Muu, mikä: _____ ?

Ostokset matkakohteessa

Kyselyssä on jaoteltu ostokset ryhmiin käyttötarkoituksen mukaan. Olkaa hyvä ja kirjatkaa ylös matkan aikana tekemänne ostokset jakaen ne vastaaviin ryhmiin.

<u>Tuliaiset</u> (ei matkalla mukana olleita varten)	<u>Matkamuistot</u> (itselle jäävät, matkasta muistuttavat esineet)	<u>Oma käyttö</u> (esim. kengät, kassi, käyttöön matkan jälkeen)

<u>Perustarpeet</u> (laastarit, hammastahna, matkalla käytettäväksi)	<u>Ruoka</u> (poissulkien ravintola- tms ruoka)	<u>Muu</u>

Ostospaikat

Mainitkaa alla oleville riveille liikkeitä, joista hankitte edellisessä kohdassa mainitsemanne ostokset. Liikkeiden ja/tai kauppaketjujen nimet riittävät, ostoksien erittely ei ole tarpeen.

Paikallisuus

Mikä merkitys paikallisella taiteella ja käsityöllä on Teille? Onko ostamienne tuotteiden alkuperällä väliä? Voitte valita useammankin vaihtoehdon.

- ☐ Tuotteen alkuperällä ei ole väliä, kunhan se on mieleinen
- ☐ Ostaisin käsitöitä, jos ne eivät olisi niin arvokkaita
- ☐ Tuliaisten olisi hyvä olla paikallista tuotantoa/käsityötä
- ☐ Yritän aina etsiä paikallisia tuotteita matkakohteesta
- ☐ Käsityöllä on enemmän tunnelmaa kuin tehdasvalmisteisilla tuotteilla
- ☐ Ihailen ihmisten osaamista ja haluan tukea heitä ostamalla käsin valmistettuja tuotteita
- ☐ Muu, mikä? _____

Arvioitu rahankäyttö

Teittekö rahankäyttösuunnitelman matkaanne varten?

- ☐ Kyllä
☐ Ei

Jos vastasitte edelliseen kysymykseen 'Kyllä',
 paljonko rahaa varasitte käytettäväksi ostoksiin tällä matkalla? _____

Kuinka paljon arvioisitte keskiverron, tällä matkalla ostamanne tuotteen maksaneen? _____

Kuinka paljon arvokkain, tältä matkalta ostamanne tuote maksoi? _____

Kuinka paljon arvioisitte tähän mennessä käyttäneenne ostoksiin matkanne aikana? _____

Ostokset kokemuksena

Minkä arvioisitte pääsyyksi ostosten tekemiseen matkakohteessa? Voitte valita useammankin vaihtoehdon.

- ☐ Ostosmahdollisuudet ovat pääsyy matkakohteen valintaan
☐ Muun tekemisen puute
☐ Ostosten tekeminen on olennainen osa matkakohteeseen tutustumista
☐ Haluan ostaa jotain, mitä kotona ei ole saatavilla
☐ Haluan konkreettisia muistoja matkastani
☐ Kotiin jääneille ihmisille on vietävä tuliaisia matkalta
☐ Haluan tukea matkakohteen yrityksiä ja työllisyyttä
☐ Ostan tuotteita vain tarpeeseen
- ☐ Muu, mikä? _____
- ☐ En yleensä tee ostoksia matkoilla

Mikä tällä matkalla ostamanne tuote on Teille mieluisin? Miksi?

Oliko jotakin, mitä ette saanut tai löytänyt matkallanne, minkä olisitte halunnut ostaa? Jäikö jotain puuttumaan?

Kiitos vastauksistanne!